

# **City of Chandler Mayor's Youth Commission**

## **Teen Town Hall 2013 Report**



# **Chandler City Council**

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Jay Tibshraeny

## **Vice Mayor**

Jack Sellers

## **Councilmembers**

Trinity Donovan

Nora Ellen

Kevin Hartke

Rick Heumann

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# **Mayor's Youth Commission 2012-13**

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Sanjay Srinivasan

Kevin Walberg

Haoxuan Wu

Connie Zhu

## **Honorary Members**

Sammi Tam

## **Staff Liaison**

Tony Baumann, Recreation Coordinator II

Erika Berry, Recreation Superintendent

**The Mayor's Youth Commission would like to extend a special thanks to Chipotle, Einstein Bros. Bagels, Fry's Food Stores, Paradise Bakery, and Sprouts for their donations used to provide breakfast and lunch. We would also like to thank the City of Chandler for giveaway items and for providing wonderful amenities such as the Council Chambers and City Hall for the forum.**



Mayor Jay Tibshraeny and the Chandler City Council

# Teen Town Hall

## April 4, 2013



Hosted by the City of Chandler Mayor's Youth Commission

## Schedule

8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

**Arrival and Registration**  
City Hall Council Chambers

8:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.

**Opening Session** – City Hall Council Chambers  
**Special Guest Speakers:**  
Mayor Jay Tibshraeny  
Isabella Weems, Origami Owl  
Teambuilding activity – Abel Mendoza

9:25 a.m. – 11:25 a.m.

**Committee Sessions**  
Career Planning – City Hall 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Rm. A  
Teen Driving – City Hall 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Rm. B  
Teen Drug Use – City Hall 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Large Conference Rm.  
Tolerance – City Hall 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Large Conference Rm.

11:30 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.

**Lunch (provided by Chipotle)**  
City Hall Mezzanine

12:15 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

**Committee Sessions Resume**

1:05 p.m. – 1:25 p.m.

**Committee Session Presentations**  
City Hall Council Chambers

1:25 p.m. – 1:35 p.m.

**Closing Session**  
City Hall Council Chambers

During the committee sessions, participants will be divided into groups and assigned a topic from the list above that affects local teens today. Teen Town Hall aims for each of these groups to propose an effective plan of solution for the given issue. The recommendations (from this report) will be given to the Mayor and Council for their consideration. The goal of the Teen Town Hall is to immerse high school students in the local government action process, expose them to issues affecting teens today, and empower them to help in creating solutions for these issues.

Thank you to



for sponsoring today's event.

The Mayor's Youth Commission sponsored its fourth annual Teen Town Hall on Thursday, April 4, 2013 at Chandlers City Hall. The purpose of the Teen Town Hall is to bring together teenagers from the community to discuss topics of concern to Chandler's teens and offer recommendations for practical solutions the community can implement. To ensure input from all sectors of our community, individuals from numerous private and public high schools and non-profit groups within the City of Chandler were invited to participate.

The Teen Town Hall began with Mayor's Youth Commission member Christopher Hacnik welcoming the participants and then introducing Mayor Jay Tibshraeny. Mayor Tibshraeny addressed the participants, stating he was excited to see their interest and involvement in the event. He encouraged the participants to engage in the day's activities and said he looked forward to the presentation of the Teen Town Hall Report at a future City Council meeting. Mayor Tibshraeny's speech was followed by a keynote address by Miss Isabella Weems, the founder of Origami Owl. Miss Weems gave an inspirational speech about taking a small idea and growing it into a viable business. An energizing team-building activity led by Abel Mendoza, Recreation Coordinator for the City of Chandler, concluded the opening session. Participants were then divided into four discussion groups covering different topics that the Commission had chosen earlier based on last year's survey. The topics of discussion were **Career Planning, Teen Driving, Teen Drug Use, and Tolerance.**

Participants met in their groups and began discussion of their assigned topics by defining the problem and possible contributing factors. The groups were then asked to focus on solutions to address the issue and develop practical recommendations that could be easily implemented within the City of Chandler. Each group met for two hours before lunch and for 45 minutes after lunch.

In the closing session, one or more teen spokespersons from each of the discussion groups presented his/her committee's recommendations to all the Town Hall participants. Each teen presented his/her topic, several recommendations, ideas on how these recommendations were to be carried out, and who should implement the suggestions. These presentations provided attendees the opportunity to gain understanding and insight from one another. Rushi Shah, a member of the Mayor's Youth Commission, closed the day by thanking all the dignitaries and participants for attending. He informed the participants that all their hard work would be compiled into a report.

This Teen Town Hall report will be made available to various agencies, organizations, clubs and schools for review, and will be used as a resource in our community. The Teen Town Hall event provides both teens and adults the opportunity to communicate openly with one another about important issues that affect them.

The following pages provide details on each of the four topics of discussion at this year's Teen Town Hall, as well as the specific recommendations for change created by each group.

## **Career Planning**

### **Discussion Summary:**

The discussion focused on how to motivate high school students at younger ages (i.e. freshmen/sophomores) to focus on grades and course choices based on their desired college majors. Top issues were how to make college a more feasible goal to students, available job and college fairs, gaining parents' involvement, career planning for those not interested in attending college and changing student's mindsets to be more engaged. The methods to solve the aforementioned were broken down into several subtopics that denote the various inhibiting factors in career planning. Ultimately, the primary topic of discussion was how to communicate with the family as a whole--especially parents. To address these issues, the group's recommendations included the creation of a career center website, offering senior career talks, and hosting a career week.

### **Recommendations:**

#### **1. Create a career center website**

The goal of the website would be to educate students about internships and unconventional jobs, and provide scholarship and grant information. The website would offer a job-screening feature, which would allow students to enter job preferences such as salary, subject matter, work environment, required education, etc. and would also include careers that do not require a college education. The aim would be for students to then choose course work to support their career goals. To implement this recommendation, the Chandler Unified School District (CUSD) would create the website and give all high school students access to it. CUSD would request job information such as salary, education requirement and skills from the City of Chandler to enhance the website. Career center counselors would update the website and provide in-person assistance.

#### **2. Senior career talks**

The purpose of the senior career talks would be to provide peer mentoring on how to approach preparation for their careers after high school. The program would be offered during conference period and seniors would receive community service hours for their participation. To implement this recommendation, Chandler Unified School District would organize the seniors and undergraduate meetings, which would be held at each school's career center or library.

#### **3. Career week**

The goal of career week would be to provide high school students a weeklong opportunity to explore high school courses, careers, colleges and scholarship information, learn how to seek application recommendations, and participate in a career fair offered at the beginning of their freshman and sophomore years of high school. The week would be hosted either right before the school year begins or during the first month of school in hopes of getting undergraduates motivated and focused on grades and course choices. To implement this recommendation, Chandler Unified School District would work with local colleges and businesses to provide students with job demonstrations, goal setting, trade requirements and more. CUSD would also work

with the City of Chandler to host the career fair at the end of the week. The event would potentially take place at the City of Chandler Community Center.

### **Addressing Career Planning**

#### **Facilitators:**

Michael Finelli, Grand Canyon University  
Matt Goetzfried, Grand Canyon University  
Nicole Porter, Grand Canyon University  
Atharva Dhole, Mayor's Youth Commission Member  
Viputheshwar Sitaraman, Mayor's Youth Commission Member

#### **Teen Participants:**

Ryon Alcala, Hamilton High School  
Jake Autrey, Valley Christian High School  
Emily Baker, Chandler Early College  
Catherine Carson, Arizona College Prep  
Samantha DeMarco, Perry High School  
Brandon Dyer, Valley Christian High School  
David Elliott, Perry High School  
Kameryn Finnerty, Basha High School  
Dustin Guo, Hamilton High School  
Delaney Hayes, Hamilton High School  
Ileeyah Hoeck, Chandler High School  
Esteban Jimenez, Basha High School  
Lara Joaquin, Chandler High School  
Laveena Joy, Perry High School  
Kelsey Kramer, Perry High School  
Francisco Leon, El Dorado High School  
Angela McCay, Perry High School  
Kayla, McClendon, Arizona College Prep  
Shareda Nolan, El Dorado High School  
Marissa Pelmont, Perry High School  
Samuel Rozinski, Bash High School  
Ben Ruelas, Basha High School  
Ailani Spurr, Valley Christian High School  
Adriana Stohn, Chandler High School  
Christy Thomas, Arizona College Prep  
Andrea Torres, Chandler High School  
Rachel Townsend, Valley Christian High School  
Michaela Werlinger, Basha High School

## **Teen Driving**

### **Discussion Summary:**

The group began the discussion by identifying the dangers teens face while driving. Participants discussed how distractions and lack of prior preparation before entering a vehicle influences driving decisions. Teen drivers are often in a rush and do not finalize their plans, resulting in texting or last minute changes. In addition, teens can be distracted by listening to music or to other passengers in the vehicle. To address these issues the group proposed the requirement of defensive driving classes, reformation of the driver's license test to include benchmarking driving tests for permitted drivers, and reformation of driving laws.

### **Recommendations:**

#### **1. Requirement of defensive driving class**

Requiring defensive driving classes would educate students about the rules of the road and tips on how to remain stress-free while driving. Classes would include public service announcement (PSA) to teach teen drivers what not to do while driving. The goal would be to show the impact of unsafe driving. Local governments would implement this recommendation with the classes taught by contracted companies. They would also work with local teens to create the PSA's.

#### **2. Reform the driver's license test and require benchmarking driving tests for permitted drivers**

To ensure understanding of the rules of the road by all drivers, driver's license tests would be revised to maintain consistency. Current drivers would be required to retake a driver's test and permitted drivers would be required to take several benchmarking tests during the permit phase to obtain their license. The reform would be carried out by the State of Arizona through the Motor Vehicle's Department.

#### **3. Driving law reform**

The purpose of reforming the driving law would be to increase the consequences of bad decision making while behind the wheel. Part of the reform would be the requirement of community service hours by the driving offenders. Community service hours could be required for common traffic violations such as a speeding ticket. In addition, driver's licenses would expire more frequently, requiring drivers to retake the driving test and stay current on driving laws. The State of Arizona would be responsible for implementing this reform.

### **Addressing Teen Driving**

#### **Facilitators:**

Maria Wojtczak, Driving MBA  
Abhishek Patel, Mayor's Youth Commission Member  
Kevin Walberg, Mayor's Youth Commission Member

#### **Teen Participants:**

Christina Albert, Perry High School  
Hunter Bartlett, Basha High School

Jacqueline Berry, Valley Christina High School  
Alexandra Busby, Hamilton High School  
Jacob Cabiejas, Hamilton High School  
Megan Chapple, Perry High School  
Andrea Charcas, Basha High School  
Samantha Clark, Basha High School  
Tommy Dailey, Hamilton High School  
Danielle Decker, Valley Christian High School  
Breanna Dragon, El Dorado High School  
Hannah Durrett, Chandler High School  
Brittney Greenbaum, Chandler Early College  
Betriary Harrison, Chandler High School  
Brady Haugo, Valley Christian High School  
Michelle Iliescu, Arizona College Prep  
Alexis Kingan, Chandler High School  
Caroline Manrubia, Arizona College Prep  
Kaitlyn Matthaeus, Chandler Early College  
James Olguin, Perry High School  
Alex Pena, Chandler High School  
Beche't Proto, Basha High School  
Alex Smigh, El Dorado High School  
Steven Taradash, Valley Christian High School  
Zach Werlinger, Basha High School  
Khandi Wilson, Arizona College Prep  
Ashley Woodman, Perry High School



## **Teen Drug Use**

### **Discussion Summary:**

This group's primary discussion focused on how to connect with youth personally and convey the message about the consequences of drug abuse. The group wanted to find a way to help those who are already under the influence of drugs and increase the severity of consequences for drug abuse. Key issues identified include the huge media influence on "cool" drug use, teens' desire to get attention from peers, and parental impacts. To combat these issues, the group recommendations include presentations by rehabilitated drug users, an increase in student activities, personalized counseling, random student drug testing, and implementation of a tip-off program.

### **Recommendations:**

#### **1. Presentations by rehabilitated drug users**

Instead of talking about drug abuse, it would be more impactful for former drug users to share their drug abuse experiences with students and the community. Speakers would discuss how and why they started using drugs, losses they've experienced, encounters with the law, and the challenges of becoming and staying clean. Information would be handed out at the end of each presentation to give teens the opportunity to ask questions that they were not comfortable bringing up during the presentation. The Chandler Unified School District would collaborate with rehabilitation centers to find people willing to share their stories at no cost.

#### **2. Increase student activities**

To keep teens active and engaged in the community, schools would provide and promote more school-sponsored service activities. Activities would include awareness campaigns and participation in service activities with local organizations. These activities would detract teens from the possibility of drug abuse by providing them with more awareness on the consequences of drug use, and give them a purpose of being involved in their community. The Chandler Unified School District would work with each high school to increase drug abuse awareness on campus and provide additional school-sponsored service activities.

#### **3. Personalized counseling**

Teachers would require students to attend personalized counseling sessions to address any high-risk behaviors (low grades, attendance, and behavioral changes). The goal would be to address problems before they lead to drug use. If needed, counselors would recommend teen drug abuse organizations to students. Chandler Unified School District would work with teachers and counselors to give them the tools to help identify students who might need help.

#### **4. Random drug testing for all high school and junior high school students**

All students would be subject to random drug testing in hopes of deterring drug use. The Chandler Unified School District would send home permission slips at the beginning of the year to gain parental permission and support. To implement this program, Chandler Unified School District would create the permission form and contact

local testing organizations to provide screenings. CUSD would also seek federal grants to offset the cost of the program.

### **5. Tip-off program**

School tip-off programs would allow students to confidentially report drug use suspicions to administration online. The program would give school administrators more reliable information on which students are using drugs. To implement this program, Chandler Unified School district would create the website and inform students of its availability.

### **Addressing Teen Drug Use**

#### **Facilitators:**

Billy Hood, ICAN/CCYSA

Connie Zhu, Mayor's Youth Commission Member

#### **Teen Participants:**

Fabiana Aguilera, Chandler Early College

Maame Amoa-Asare, Arizona College Prep

Rayne Anderson, Hamilton High School

Mabbey Avila, Chandler High School

Kyle Berke, Hamilton High School

Linsey Chew, Hamilton High School

Ty Corbin, Valley Christian High School

Lani Dekker, Perry High School

Elizabeth Dellis, Arizona College Prep

Alexis Dominguez, Perry High School

Bailey Flansburg, Valley Christian High School

Brindlee Fullmer, Basha High School

Jonathan Guardiola, Chandler Early College

Kenya Hadjouti, Arizona College Prep

Almedina Hajric, Perry High School

Eric Kwon, Hamilton High School

Aline Lewis, Chandler High School

Kendra Lorbeck, Valley Christian High School

Kelsey Making, Perry High School

Heather Mangola, Perry High School

Melissa Miramontes, El Dorado High School

Stephen Parisi, Valley Christian High School

Madison Rincon, Basha High School

Nandy Rodas, Chandler High School

Skylar Turski, Basha High School

Iyazhane Veasley, Basha High School

# **Tolerance**

## **Discussion Summary:**

Group members began the day by defining tolerance as respect, acceptance, and the recognition of different beliefs or ideas whether you agree with them or not. The discussions led to how tolerance is promoted, what individuals have a tolerance for and how action should take place. The group focused on ways to promote and build tolerance within our community and how to appeal to different age groups. The group recommends the implementation of school impact clubs, a tolerance poster competition, a tolerance monument, a tolerance booth at the Chandler Multicultural Festival, and a walk for tolerance.

## **Recommendations:**

### **1. School impact clubs**

To help students understand how their actions can affect others, there would be the creation and support of impact clubs at each high school. Individual school student councils would spearhead these efforts by engaging the entire student body to help others. To create these clubs, the group recommends the Chandler Unified School District create a tolerance club at each Chandler high school.

### **2. Tolerance poster competition**

To educate peers and spread the idea of tolerance, schools would require each class to create a tolerance poster. The City of Chandler Vision Gallery staff would judge the posters at each school and display the winning poster at Chandler City Hall a week before and after the Chandler Multicultural Festival. Local businesses and organizations would be contacted to provide prizes to each school's winner. To increase the competition, the group recommends the Chandler Unified School District collaborate with the City of Chandler Diversity Office and Vision Gallery to request judges and arrange for posters to be displayed.

### **3. Tolerance monument**

To promote the City of Chandler as a tolerant city, a Tolerance monument would be erected in downtown Chandler. The monument would be a piece of community art displaying the handprints or signatures of citizens who pledge, "I will not tolerate intolerance." The monument would be provided by the City of Chandler, who would work with the Chandler Arts Commission to create the monument. At completion, the monument would be dedicated by Mayor and Council.

### **4. Tolerance booth at the Chandler Multicultural Festival**

To engage citizens in what they think tolerance is, there would be a tolerance drawing station at the Chandler Multicultural Festival. Citizen's drawings would be on display to celebrate people's ideas and beliefs. The City of Chandler Mayor's Youth Commission would host the booth at the Multicultural Festival and provide the drawing materials.

### **5. Walk for tolerance**

To create a symbol within the community to advocate tolerance and show change is possible, there would be a free walk for tolerance before the kickoff to the Chandler

Multicultural Festival. Participants would wear a specific color or item to represent their culture. The City of Chandler Diversity Office would coordinate sponsorships and organize the walk.

### **Addressing Tolerance**

#### **Facilitators:**

Karen Jacques, Chandler Early College teacher  
Jonathan Chien, Mayor's Youth Commission Member

#### **Teen Participants:**

Russell Amberson, Valley Christian High School  
Kalei Ashlock, Perry High School  
Daniel Carty, Valley Christian High School  
Lydia Chew, Hamilton High School  
Erica Cornelius, Perry High School  
Sarah Fallah-Adi, Arizona College Prep  
Skyler Fancher, Valley Christian High School  
Anyssa Figueroa, Chandler High School  
Victoria Gonzalez, El Dorado High School  
Katie Horner, Perry High School  
Andrea Lin, Hamilton High School  
Gabbie Lobe, Perry High School  
Aria Ottmueller, Valley Christian High School  
Maxwell Parise, Basha High School  
Ashely Raimendi, Chandler High School  
Brianna Randazzo, Basha High School  
Nancy Rodas, Chandler High School  
Roberto Sellers, El Dorado High School  
Derrik Slade, Basha High School  
Kriza Torres, Chandler High School  
Abby White, Chandler Early College  
Jake Xu, Hamilton High School